

PARK RULES

While visiting Alum Rock Park, please help protect our valuable park resources and wildlife, and assure an enjoyable visit for you and all of the park's visitors by complying with the following rules and any posted regulations. Once the ecological balance which provides its unique natural beauty is destroyed, it may be extremely difficult to restore.

Park rangers are here to assist you. Please contact one of them if you have any questions or need assistance at (408) 259-5477.

- Park closing time is one-half hour after sunset. When hiking, allow yourself plenty of time to return before darkness. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.240)*
- Motorcycles, minibikes, or other motor vehicles are to be operated by a licensed driver on public road only; not on trails, service roads, hillsides or in picnic areas. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.100)*
- Due to high fire hazard, no fireworks are allowed. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.200)*
- Smoking is not permitted in the park. *(S.J.M.C. 9.44.030)*
- Pets are not permitted in the park. Assistance dogs are, of course, excepted. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.110)*
- Please do not gather plants, rocks or other natural objects. Park visitors who follow you, wish to enjoy them too. Wood gathering is prohibited. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.220)*
- Horses are not allowed in or around the picnic areas. No running of horses is allowed. *(S.J.M.C. 13.44.110)*
- All other State laws and San José municipal codes apply to this park and are strictly enforced.

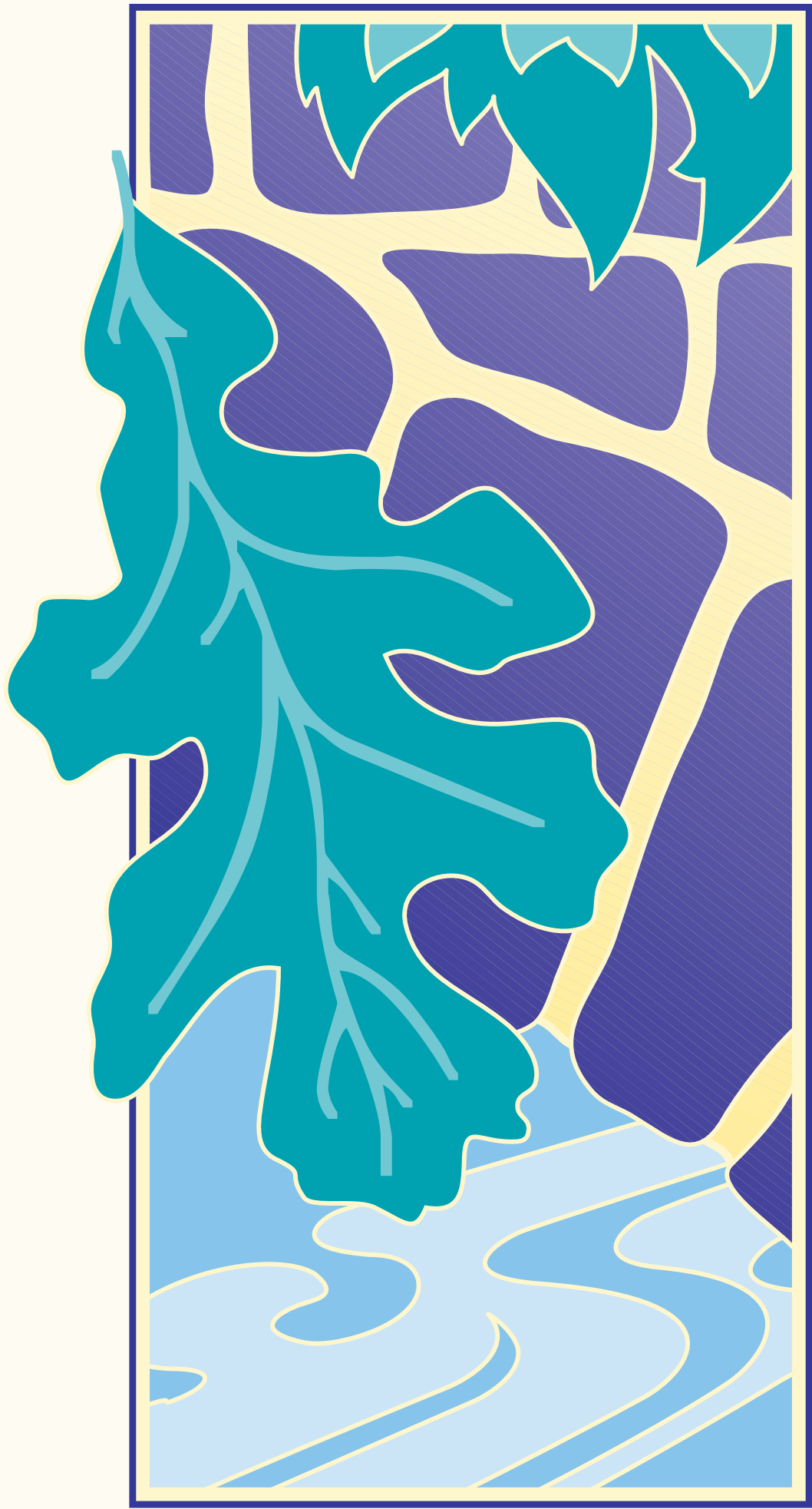
ALUM ROCK PARK
San José Department of Parks,
Recreation and Neighborhood Services
15350 Penitencia Creek Road
San José, CA 95127-1348
(408) 259-5477 Alum Rock Park
(408) 794-7275 Park Reservations
www.sjparks.org

Park Hours: Open 8 a.m. until one-half hour after sunset Tuesday through Sunday.
Park is closed on Mondays.

Parking fees may be charged the year round.
Discount parking fees are available for seniors, veterans and disabled persons.



ALUM ROCK



SAN JOSE
REGIONAL PARKS

WELCOME

Welcome to Alum Rock Park, one of California's oldest municipal park. Nestled within the Alum Rock Canyon in the foothills of the Diablo Range, the park's many acres of natural, rugged beauty provide visitors with many leisure outdoor activities including hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, family and group picnicking, and of course just relaxing. Picnic tables, barbecue pits, water and restrooms are available in most picnic areas, with lawns and a children's playground in the mid-canyon area.

RICH IN NATURE

The unique east-west canyon and its steep sides contain many delicate plant and animal communities. Soils on the north canyon slopes are held in place by a variety of grasses, poison oak, holly-leaf cherry, sagebrush, and scattered live oak trees. Black-tailed deer, brush rabbits and quail can be seen by quiet, observant hikers. Red-tailed hawks and turkey vultures can frequently be seen riding the air currents overhead.

The opposite or south side of the canyon offers a totally different natural community. Trees such as the California coast live and valley oak, bay, madrone, and California buckeye are abundant, while smaller shrubs like the toyon, wild rose, and wild blackberries are found in more sunny areas. The chattering of gray squirrels and Steller's jays are common sounds. On rare occasions, a hiker might see—only for an instant—the elusive bobcat as he disappears into the dense brush.

Penitencia Creek is lined with big-leaf maple, white alder, and western sycamore. Wild honey-suckle vines, the arroyo and red willow add to its lush plant life.

Spring provides the park with color from a variety of wild flowers including the California poppy and sticky monkey flower. Ferns are prevalent during the winter and spring months. Alum Rock Park must be seen during all its seasons to be truly appreciated.

This publication can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, computer disk, audio tape or Braille. Requests can be made by calling (408) 259-5477 (voice) or (408) 294-9337 (TTY). If you have questions about accessibility in the park, please call (408) 259-5477.

RICH IN HISTORY

Alum Rock Park did not obtain its present name until about the turn of the century. The park which was founded in 1872, was simply referred to as the “reservation.” The name Alum Rock was derived from a huge rock that was believed to contain a high percentage of alum.

From 1890 to 1932, the park was a nationally-known health spa with 27 mineral springs containing seven different minerals. Without a doubt, this was the park's most popular period. For a quarter, you could ride from downtown San José to the park on the Alum Rock Steam Railroad. The park charmed its visitors with mineral baths, an indoor swimming pool, a tea garden, restaurant and dance pavilion.

During the period between World War II and the early 1960s, thousands of visitors came to the park from the booming Santa Clara Valley. The park became so overcrowded that the facilities could no longer be properly maintained, and the plant and animal communities were severely endangered.

As a result of this over-use, the park underwent a change from a facility with a multitude of uses to a more natural setting emphasizing family outdoor activities that result in reduced impact on the park's natural environment.

SPECIAL FACILITIES

Reservable picnic areas accommodate up to 300. Each area includes tables, barbecue stoves, and nearby restrooms. Some of the more secluded sites require a short walk since vehicles are not allowed into the area. For reservation information, please call (408) 277-2757.

The Visitor Center/Ranger Office is located in the mid-canyon area to assist you. Information and first aid are some of the services offered. There are several educational displays in the Visitor Center that are both interesting and fun.

The Youth Science Institute (Y.S.I.) is open to all park visitors. Call (408) 258-4322 for information on programs and operating hours.

(continued inside)

ALUM ROCK PARK TRAILS

There are approximately 13 miles of trails including six miles of horse trails and three miles of bicycle trails. Hikers are welcome on all trails, while equestrians and cyclists are requested to use designated trails only. Please observe trail designation and signs; don't endanger yourself and others by using inappropriate trails.

The South Rim Trail follows the canyon rim to numerous lookout points with spectacular views of the Santa Clara Valley and surrounding foothills. Hikers can make a loop around the canyon rim and then return down to the main area by way of the Penitencia Creek Trail. The entire loop takes about two hours.

The Penitencia Creek Trail begins at the western end of the park and follows the old electric railroad bed along Penitencia Creek. This shaded and scenic trail is an excellent choice for the leisure hiker. This entire trail has been designated a National Recreation Trail in the National Trail System by the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Woodland Trail wanders under the cool shade trees just below the park service road. Inspiration Point offers another vista of the Santa Clara Valley and a good view of the grassland and Eagle Rock on the canyon's north slope. This short trail is a little over a mile in length.

The North Rim Trail begins at the west boundary of the park and proceeds along the north side of the canyon. Eagle Rock Overlook offers a panorama of the Santa Clara Valley and south end of the San Francisco Bay.

The Todd Quick Trail traverses Alum Rock's newest addition on the north side. It is a multi-use single track loop climbing from the North Rim Trail to a shaded rest site. The trail is dedicated to the memory of one of Alum Rock Park's most devoted and enthusiastic rangers, who passed away in 1991.

The Bay Area Ridge Trail is a 400 mile multiple-use trail that, when completed, will connect parks surrounding San Francisco Bay Trail Area. The trail starts in Alum Rock Park at the Penitencia Creek parking lot and follows the Penitencia Creek Trail up to the end of the main parking lot. From there, the trail loops back along the North Rim and Todd Quick Trails and reconnects to the Penitencia Creek Trail. For more information about the Bay Area Ridge Trail, call (415) 561-2595.

The Boccardo Trail connects Alum Rock Park to property managed by the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority (OSA). This one and a half mile non-looping trail ascends and ends at the prominent knoll located at 1896 feet in elevation. The trail is open to hikers, equestrians and bicyclists. San José park rangers will patrol the trail. For additional information regarding the Boccardo Trail and the Santa Clara County Open Space Authority, please call (408) 224-7476 or visit their web site www.openspaceauthority.org.

